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The date of publication of A. Guenée's Geometridae et Uranides, Histoire Naturelle des Insectes. Species Général des Lépidoptères

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Abstract. The date of publication of volumes 9 and 10 of Achille Guenée's "Histoire Naturelle des Insectes. Species Général des Lépidoptères" should be accepted as [1858], not 1857.

Introduction

Two important works in the taxonomy of Geometridae are volumes 9 and 10 of the "Histoire Naturelle des Insectes. Species Général des Lépidoptères", written by Achille Guenée (1809–1880) under the joint editorship of J.B.A.D. Boisduval and A. Guenée. Both volumes of the text are imprinted with the date 1857, although the "Atlas" (plates) bears the imprint 1858. There has been inconsistency in the literature as to whether the actual date of publication for the text should be 1857 or 1858, and the purpose of this short paper is to clarify the matter and present evidence for what we trust will establish the date that should be accepted – dates being of particular importance in taxonomy.

Examples of conflicting date usage may be illustrated in works by two key researchers on Geometridae: L.B. Prout (Prout 1910a, b, 1912) referred to Guenée 1858, whereas D.S. Fletcher, in his influential work on the generic names of Geometridae (Fletcher 1979), cited 1857 for the text, but 1858 for the "Atlas" (plates).

Later, Parsons et al. (1999) adopted the date "Guenée [1858]", the square brackets indicating that the date was established from sources other than the date imprinted on the publication. No explanation was given for the adoption of the date. Hausmann (2001) cited the work as "Guenée, A., [1858]" in the references, but "1857 ff" in his list of key works to Geometridae in the introduction to his volume. Rajaei et al. (2022) used "Guenée, 1858" in their paper announcing the launch of an online global taxonomic facility of Geometridae, but adopted the use of parentheses (square brackets) around the date of the associated online database, i.e., "Guenée, [1858]" (https://geometroidea.smns-bw.org/geometridae/Catalogue/).

That confusion about the dates remains, may also be observed in the Geometridae component of the online database provided by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF Secretariat, accessed 13 August 2022). While some generic names are cited in Volume 9 as Guenée (1857) (e.g., *Agathia* and *Aplodes*), others in the same volume are listed as Guenée (1858) (e.g., *Almodes*

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and *Ceratonyx*). And while the date of *Bombycodes* Guenée, published in Volume 10, is given as 1857, the type species, described in the original two pages later, is dated 1858. There are many other examples in the database of the two dates being used.

Discussion

We consider that important evidence for accepting the date of 1858 for Guenée's volumes 9 (Guenée [1858a]) and 10 (Guenée [1858b]) is to be found in the Bibliographie de la France, where the full reference to Guenée volume 9 is provided on page 17 (Bibliographie de la France 1858: 17, entry no. 338). Dates of publications are not given for individual entries in the Bibliographie, but rather entries are listed collectively under the date of the respective number of this publication, in this case Volume ("Tome") 2, No. 2, which is dated 8 January 1858 (Bibliographie de la France 1858a: 13). The full reference to Guenée's volume 10 is on page 153 (Bibliographie de la France 1858b: 153, entry no. 2877), in Volume 2, No. 12, dated 20 March 1858.

The validity of the date of 1858 was explored by R.B. Williams in a paper primarily aimed at establishing the dates of the parts and consolidated volumes of H.T. Stainton's "A Manual of British Butterflies and Moths" (Williams 2019). Citing the Bibliographie de la France, Williams noted (pp. 94, 95), as we have done above, that volume 9 ("Tome" I) of Guenée's work was published between 2 and 8 January 1858 and volume 10 ("Tome" II) between 13 and 19 March 1858 (given as 20 March 1858 in Bibliographie de la France). Importantly, he demonstrated that Stainton had awaited publication of Guenée's volumes, of which he had seen some proofs earlier, and had delayed the publication of his own work on Geometridae for a few months to benefit from their content. The explanation for the imprinted date of 1857 was explained cogently by Williams, who cited a published note by Stainton stating that he had seen some of the proofs in April 1857. (We have sourced this note and see that Stainton had indeed viewed proofs during a visit to Guenée in France, and was given to understand at that time that publication would take place in September (Stainton 1857a).) Stainton's own publication (in 1858) occurred shortly after Guenée's. (See Williams 2019: 91, 95.) Williams concluded by accepting the date of 1858 for both volumes 9 and 10.

We have investigated further and found what we consider to be compelling evidence for a publication date of 1858 in the form of an article from The Entomologist's Weekly Intelligencer (Anon. 1858), dated Saturday, January 9, 1858. This piece, assuredly written by Stainton, expressed considerable frustration and exasperation with the several delays in the expected publication of Guenée's work. Stainton continued to hold back his own publication to await Guenée's results and was in close touch with him. In this rather pointed article, September 1857 was stated as the new intended date of publication. However:

"*... first, it was to have been out in September; then, after repeated correspondence on our part, M. Guenée, who really appears to have exerted himself immensely to accommodate us, wrote that the volume would be published before the end of November ...*"

But the work did not appear in November and the article continues:

"*... and nay, more, that December is also gone, and did we not receive a positive assurance that the volume would be published on the 20th of December? And did not "our own correspondent*

[Stainton]," calling there on that day, learn to his regret *"that M. Guenée's volume would appear in the course of January"* ..."

Guenée's work (volume 9) was at last received in January 1858, a note at the end of the article stating:

"*Since the above was in type, we are happy to announce that we* have received *the first volume of M Guenée's* Geometrae ..."

In the previous issue of the Intelligencer (No. 66, 2 January 1858) there was no mention of Guenée's first volume (volume 9) having been received. And we note further that the article in the issue of 9 January fits the citation in the Bibliographie de la France dated 8 January 1858. Guenée's second volume (volume 10) appeared somewhat later, as noted above. It was still awaited on 3 February 1858 (Stainton 1858a). Stainton had received a copy by 23 February 1858 (Stainton 1858b), although whether this was an advance copy, given Stainton's pressure on Guenée, or the published version remains uncertain.

We are conscious that Guenée informed Stainton in a letter dated September 26, 1857 (Guenée in Stainton 1857b) that volume 9 had been printed, but he made it clear that it was not yet published and that he too was awaiting publication. There is a well-established distinction between the date when a work is printed and the date that it is published. The meaning of 'printing' is self-evident. But publication requires that a work must be available to the public (derived from the Latin *publicationem* – a making public) and obtainable, i.e., available for distribution. Indeed, Article 8 of the ICZN (1999) ("What constitutes published work") requires that a work "must be issued for the purpose of providing a public and permanent scientific record"; that "it must be obtainable, when first issued, free of charge or by purchase"; and "it must have been produced in an edition containing simultaneously obtainable copies by a method that assures numerous identical and durable copies…". Guenée himself made a distinction between printing and publication in this instance. He stated in his letter that "My first volume [i.e., volume 9] is printed, and the plates are all ready, but the publisher will only bring out the volumes both together." Guenée wrote that he could not enlighten Stainton on the precise date of publication of his two volumes: "I have lately written [to the publisher] to complain of this dawdling, and I hope he will hasten the publication; that depends entirely on him."

In essence, therefore, we argue that it is fair to assume that the most reliable source of information comes from Guenée himself — that is from a combination of his letter to Stainton, and what he imparted to Stainton when he visited Guenée on 20 December 1857, namely that the work would be published in January of 1858.

Conclusion

While sensitive to the contrary opinion, we find no firm evidence for accepting the year 1857, and the counter-evidence from Anonymous [Stainton] (1858) seems highly persuasive. We conclude that [1858] should be accepted as the valid date, being also guided by Article 21 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 1999) and the requirements of what constitutes published work. We consider that the weight of evidence lies firmly in favour of [1858]. As such, we note that in such a circumstance (following Article 21.4) "… the earliest day on which the work is demonstrated to be in existence as a published work [our emphasis] is to be adopted.". For the

reasons given above, we consider that the earliest date of Guenée's publication would be between 2 and 8 January 1858.

We trust that our argumentation will establish the accepted date to be [1858]. In so doing, we hope to remove the uncertainty among geometrid taxonomists about which date to apply to Guenée's much cited publications.

A note on citation style

In versions of the ICZN prior to the Fourth Edition it was recommended that when the actual date of publication differs from the date specified in the work (the imprint date), the actual date should be cited in square brackets. Under Recommendation 22A.2.2 of the Fourth Edition of the Code (ICZN 1999), however, it is stated simply that the actual date of publication should be cited – there is no mention of square brackets. The option of using square brackets is explained in Recommendation 22A.2.3, which proposes placing the imprinted date in parentheses, the precise opposite of the earlier practice, which is certain to result in confusion. We have, therefore, opted to use the well-tested and peer-reviewed approach of using square brackets for Guenée [1858a, b] to make it perfectly clear to readers and applicants of future taxonomy that the date we have established is determined from external evidence.

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